

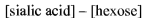
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**Amendments to the Claims**

Please cancel claims 10, 24 and 26, and amend claims 1-5, 8, 9, 11-14, 17-23, 25 and 27. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

**Claim Listing:**

1. (currently amended) A modified serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein: (a)  ~~$\leq 20\%$~~  between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b)  ~~$\geq 26\%$~~  between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
2. (currently amended) A modified serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein (a)  ~~$\leq 9\%$~~  between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b)  ~~$\geq 29\%$  or  $\leq 27\%$~~  between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
3. (currently amended) The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  ~~$\geq 0\%$~~  between 4-8% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position.
4. (currently amended) The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  ~~$\geq 0\%$~~  between 40-50% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
5. (currently amended) A modified meningococcal capsular saccharide, ~~optionally~~ conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein the saccharide comprises  $n$  or more repeating units of the disaccharide unit:



where the hexose is either galactose or glucose and  $n$  is an integer from 1 to 100, and wherein:

- (a)  ~~$\leq 2\%$~~   $x\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or

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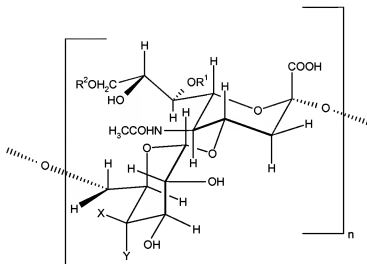
(b) when hexose is galactose,  $\geq y\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and when hexose is glucose,  $\geq y\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position,

where: when hexose is galactose,  $x$  is 29  $x$  is between 2-9 and  $y$  is 26  $y$  is between 35-55; and when hexose is glucose,  $x$  is 9,  $y$  is 29 and  $z$  is 27  $x$  is between 2-9 and  $y$  is between 35-55.

6. (original) The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is galactose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 43% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
7. (original) The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is glucose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 45% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
8. (currently amended) A composition comprising  $a$  molecules of serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is  $b$ , and wherein: (a)  $\leq 29\%$  between 2-9% of the  $a \cdot b$  serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b)  $\geq 26\%$  between 35-55% of the  $a \cdot b$  serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.
9. (currently amended) A composition comprising  $a$  molecules of serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is  $b$ , and wherein: (a)  $\leq 9\%$  between 2-9% of the  $a \cdot b$  serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b)  $\geq 29\%$  or  $\leq 27\%$  between 35-55% of the  $a \cdot b$  serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.
10. (cancelled)

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11. (currently amended) A saccharide comprising  $n$  or more repeats of the following disaccharide unit:



wherein:

- $n$  is an integer from 1 to 100,
- $X$  and  $Y$  are different groups selected from  $-H$  and  $-OH$ ,
- $R_1$  is independently selected from  $-H$  and  $-COCH_3$  and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit,
- $R_2$  is independently selected from  $-H$  and  $-COCH_3$  and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit, and,
- when  $X$  is  $-OH$  and  $Y$  is  $-H$ , (a)  $\leq 29\%$  2-10% of  $R^1$  are  $-COCH_3$  and/or (b)  $\geq 26\%$  35-55% of  $R^2$  are  $-COCH_3$ ,
- when  $X$  is  $-H$  and  $Y$  is  $-OH$ , (a)  $\leq 9\%$  2-9% of  $R^1$  are  $-COCH_3$  and/or (b)  $\geq 29\%$  or  $\leq 27\%$  35-55% of  $R^2$  are  $-COCH_3$ ,

and wherein the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.

12. (currently amended) The saccharide of ~~any preceding claim~~ any one of claims 1-7 and 11, wherein the saccharide has an average degree of polymerisation of less than 30.
13. (currently amended) The ~~conjugation product of (i) a~~ conjugation product of (i) a saccharide of any ~~preceding claim one of claims 1-7 and 11, and (ii) a~~ preceding claim one of claims 1-7 and 11, and (ii) a wherein the carrier protein is selected from the group consisting of: diphtheria toxoid, tetanus toxoid, *H. influenzae* protein D, and CRM<sub>197</sub>.

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14. (currently amended) An immunogenic composition comprising (a) a modified capsular saccharide or conjugate of any ~~preceding claim one of claims 1-7 and 11~~, and (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
15. (original) The composition of claim 14, in aqueous form.
16. (original) The composition of claim 14, in lyophilised form.
17. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 16~~ claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup C of *N.meningitidis*.
18. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 17~~ claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup A of *N.meningitidis*.
19. (currently amended) The composition of claim 18, wherein the serogroup A antigen is a modified saccharide in which one or more of the hydroxyl groups on the native saccharide has/have been replaced by a blocking group.
20. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 19~~ claim 14, further comprising an antigen from serogroup B of *N.meningitidis*.
21. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 20~~ claim 14, further comprising a saccharide antigen from *Haemophilus influenzae* type B.
22. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 21~~ claim 14, further comprising an antigen from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.
23. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 22~~ claim 14, further comprising one or more of: an antigen from hepatitis A virus; an antigen from hepatitis B virus; an antigen from *Bordetella pertussis*; a diphtheria toxoid; a tetanus toxoid; and/or a poliovirus antigen.
24. (cancelled)
25. (currently amended) A method for raising an antibody response in a mammal, comprising administering a composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 23~~ claim 14 to the mammal.
26. (cancelled)

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27. (currently amended) A process for preparing an immunogenic conjugate comprising the steps of: (1) providing a starting serogroup W135 or serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide and a carrier protein, either or both of which is/are optionally modified to render it/them reactive towards the other; (2) forming a covalent bond between the saccharide and the carrier protein; and (3) purifying the resulting glycoconjugates, wherein, between steps (1) and (3), the degree of O-acetylation at the 9 position of sialic acid residues in the starting saccharide increases to 35-55%.